

# The District 3 Slate

April 2005

County Supervisor Pam Slater-Price

*"Unless something is done to change these self-destructive habits, 1 in 3 children born today will develop Type 2 diabetes."*



County Supervisor  
Pam Slater-Price

Spring is here and, after enduring our third heaviest rainy season, it feels good to get outside and enjoy the natural beauty that surrounds us in San Diego County.

If you feel restless and want to get involved in an outdoor activity, then I suggest becoming involved with one of several organizations that are restoring and protecting our fantastic lagoons and wetlands. These non-profit groups always need volunteers to help maintain trails, develop educational programs, promote their efforts and myriad other tasks.

These are great ways to get outdoors, give of yourself, and gain the benefits of a healthy lifestyle while enhancing our quality of life. See you out there!

Pam



Supervisor Pam Slater-Price opens the School Food Summit focusing on student nutrition.

## Food Summit Asks Schools, Parents To Combat Obesity

The first-ever School Food Summit brought together more than 250 educators, school nutritionists, public health specialists and others concerned about the growing crisis of youth obesity. In the days following the March 10 summit, of which I cohosted and helped to coordinate the event, came irrefutable evidence that today's culinary habits and lack of proper exercise are putting children's health at risk.

Obese children have a greater risk of suffering asthma or wheezing, according to a study published in the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine.

A second study published just days later in the prestigious New England Journal of Medicine, warns that today's obese child will shorten his or her life by two to five years. The study, "A Potential Decline in Life



A seminar participant takes notes during Supervisor Pam Slater-Price's School Food Summit.

Expectancy In the United States in the 21st Century," cites obesity as a greater concern to public health than cancer or heart disease. It concluded that two-thirds of U.S. adults are overweight, with one-third qualifying as obese. One in three children are overweight, a rate that

has more than doubled in the past two decades. Worse, childhood diabetes has increased 10-fold.

Then came the results of a study of 314 children in Boston, children who are just a few pounds overweight when they were 8 to 15 are upwards of 20 times more at risk to become obese as young adults, based on their body mass index (BMI).

This crisis is here and it affects all of us. The Centers for Disease Control estimates the annual hospital costs to treat juvenile-obesity related illnesses to be \$127 million. The cost of treating 17 million diabetics in 2002 was \$132 billion; these numbers are predicted to climb to 50 million and **\$1 trillion** by 2027. Unless something is done to change these self-destructive habits, one in three children born today will develop Type 2 diabetes.

See **FOOD SUMMIT**/Page 2

## AROUND OUR COUNTY

### FOOD SUMMIT

*Continued from Page 1*

This is why I cosponsored the School Food Summit. Children today, due to multiple reasons, some valid, some not; consume less fruits and vegetables and more sugar-laden snacks and soft drinks. This trend must be reversed. We know the cure for obesity; unlike other diseases, we are not searching for some elusive answer - it is right before us.

(Other sponsors of the summit include the Coalition on Children and Weight San Diego, HealthLink North County, Palomar Pomerado Health and the County of San Diego.)

Author-pediatrician Christine Wood of Encinitas, one of the summit's panelists, said it best: "We have to make health contagious."

Children should not have diets consisting of French fries, candy bars, fast food and high-calorie sodas.

Dr. Harvey Haakonson, noted nutritionist and author of "Slow Carb For Life," has suggested looking past diet fads, especially for teen-agers. "A wiser way to go is to change the thinking about how you deal with food," he explained during an appearance on The Early Show. "That means changing your lifestyle. And if you're going to do all of that, you have to understand about the choices you're making.

"I suggest you include (your) teen-ager in the food buying and the food preparation. If they understand what goes into the purchase of the food and what is required in the preparation of it, and have some control over the process, it makes it a whole lot better for them. But I must say, even the fast food world, if you're going to have to indulge occasionally in fast food, there are some better choices there today. And I know people don't think of going to fast food to get a salad but some are quite good, actually."

Dr. Haakonson's advice is just a start.

Some of the suggestions raised during the summit include:

- Improve marketing of fruit, vegetables and nuts so that teens realize there are alternatives to burgers and sodas.
- Replace the chips and candy that are in on-campus vending machines with more nutritious items like granola and energy bars, trail mix and other protein-rich items.
- Eliminate school fund-raisers that involve candy, chocolate and cookies.



Keynote speaker Terri Soares (left), co-chair of the state nutrition standards committee and member of the state superintendent's task force on childhood obesity updates members on the recommendations under review by state officials. Information was shared with all who attended the summit (top), which was also translated into Spanish (below right).



**"We have to make health contagious."**

**Author-pediatrician  
Christine Wood**

These events send mixed messages that schools promote high-calorie snacks.

• Re-emphasize the importance of physical education during the school day. Children need to play - run, jump, shoot baskets, whatever catches their fancy.

Parents need to unplug the Playstation, the television (studies show obese children watch an additional one to two hours of TV each day vs. active children) and other electronic games and force their kids to get outside.

Today's reality is that children do not go

out to play. Some engage in such team sports as soccer, baseball and softball. Even then, volunteer coaches lament about the lack of commitment and how little time they have to develop a player's stamina.

Parents must realize that children need time to run around and be children. Visit the neighborhood park, throw a ball around or ride a bike.

Other suggestions include changing priorities so that families dine together at a fixed time, discourage skipping meals for whatever reasons, and reducing the size of portions served.

Many of the suggestions offered during the summit will need to be instituted by policymakers. One suggested change, making exercise programs tax-deductible, would need federal and/or state legislation.

But change is coming.

"This is a train that won't be stopped. People have likened this to an anti-smoking campaign but it's not just about taking something away," explained panelist Deborah Meeker of the state Department of Education's nutrition services division. "There needs to be change in eating habits."

## AROUND THE THIRD DISTRICT

**I**nvesting in the organizations that invest in improving our neighborhoods is one way to enhance the quality of life that gives the Third District its unique sense of community. The Board of Supervisors approved the following requests:

### ENCINITAS

#### Assisting Rotarians As They Improve Their Community

The Encinitas-La Costa Rotary received \$10,000 for its "Kids in the Community" program. The funds go to kids' programs to purchase books for schools, among other worthy projects.

### ESCONDIDO

#### Hitting the Court ... Just Like Mike!

To encourage fun activities for boys and girls of all ages, the YMCA of Escondido received a \$50,000 grant for the construction of a new outdoor basketball court at the Baker branch.

### LA JOLLA

#### Restoring Ellen Browning Park Is In The Works

Preserving the coastline is important to the La Jolla Town Council, which received \$10,000 for the Ellen Browning Scripps Park Project, which will culminate in a report containing recommendations to improve long-term park runoff and erosion efforts to promote clean water for swimming, surfing and sea life. This funding is part of an effort to revitalize the entire park, including new landscaping and other amenities.

### NORTH COUNTY

#### Protecting Victims Of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is still a plague that impacts families in our communities. North County Serenity House will use its \$5,000 grant to offset costs associated with putting on its annual fund-raising event. Serenity House opened in 1966 as the area's first non-profit social-model recovery home for female alcoholics. Today it provides housing for approximately 200 women and children, including a 100-bed residential facility, three recovery homes, four transitional living homes, and two child development centers.

### RANCHO PENASQUITOS

#### Families Are Important In Penasquitos

The Rancho Penasquitos Town Council garnered \$5,000 for its annual "Fiesta de los Penasquitos," an event that promotes community spirit and is fun for family and kids.

### RANCHO BERNARDO

#### RB Shows Its Pride ... Again And Again

Celebrating the community's patriotism, the Spirit of the Fourth received \$11,000 for its Fourth of July parades and related events. Also, the Veteran's Memorial Association was given \$1,000 for costs associated with putting on Veterans' programs in the Rancho Bernardo area during holiday events and parades, as well as help purchase flags, plaques and other necessary materials.

### SAN DIEGO

#### Restoring Rose Creek Watershed A Priority

San Diego EarthWorks received \$15,000 for the Rose Creek Watershed Project. This grant will help create and implement a



The Del Mar Fairgrounds is a popular destination for locals and tourists alike, especially as the annual county fair approaches. Following the lead started by the County of San Diego, the fairgrounds is stepping up its safety program with the addition of 10 automatic external defibrillators. A defib unit is used on a person who went into cardiac arrest by shocking the heart back into its normal rhythm. This program complements one I promoted to bring these important machines at various locations in the region.

collaborative civic, business and environmental strategic plan to address current issues now stressing the lower Rose Creek area. It will help continue the development of private and public proposals to advance the Watershed Opportunities Assessment beyond the current Phase One planning stage.

### SAN DIEGO

#### Keeping Blood Supply On The Move

Working to maintain an adequate supply of blood, the San Diego Blood Bank was awarded \$10,000 to assist with the purchase of a new van for mobile blood work.

### SAN DIEGO

#### One Step At A Time ... Toward Recovery

Mental Health Systems garnered \$10,000 for its "Walk for Recovery 2005," which will assist and bring awareness to many alcohol and drug service programs throughout San Diego County.

### SAN DIEGO

#### Dance Like You Mean It ... And Enjoy It, Too!

Malashock Dance received \$10,000 to assist with production and distribution costs associated with the "Love and Murder" production.

### SOLANA BEACH

#### Sun Shines On This Community Celebration

The Solana Beach Chamber of Commerce received \$3,000 for its annual "Fiesta del Sol," a two-day events including arts and crafts, food booths and other fun activities that entertain thousands of people on the weekend.

## Appointments Named to Panel

**I**want to thank the following individuals for agreeing to serve as my appointments on the Integrated Pest Management Committee: Terrell Solomon (toxicologist), Richard Streeper (environmental law), David Kellum (entomologist), Scott Murray (organic growing specialist), Maureen Philips (public representative) and Herb Field (structural pest control operation).

# Figures Tell Real Transit Story

**A**dvocates of “re-forming” this region’s transportation options must face the hard reality that the vast majority of San Diego residents commute to their jobs in the family car and not by rail, bus or other forms of public transit. There are myriad reasons for dismissing the limited options that are public transit.

Two separate reports released last month validate the problems facing public transit in this county. The most significant report is from the Metro-

politan Transit District, which operates the Trolley and transit busses. Despite an aggressive marketing campaign and other improvements, ridership is down a whopping 10.4 percent in just four years!

The second report, from the North County Transit District, echoes the MTD dilemma. The North County district reports a 4 percent decline in ridership on the Breeze and a 6.7 percent drop for the FAST on-demand service.

The conclusion is the same for both agencies: They are not

meeting the needs of their clients, or as one official admitted, “We haven’t been adaptive.”

Is pushing public transit in San Diego County an example of trying to force a round peg into a square hole? Do the dreams of public planners match the realities faced by commuters trying to survive in a world that long-ago abandoned the 9-to-5 work schedule?

San Diego is not San Francisco, Boston or Chicago, which started with systems that moved people between established neighborhoods and the sections of the city where they worked. These systems are rerouted, changed and/or modified as the cities expand.

The flaw with public transit here in San Diego is the Trolley, Coaster and buses fail to deliver, in a reasonable period of time, commuters to their jobs in University City, Kearny Mesa and Torrey Mesa-Sorrento Valley. Downtown is adequately served but the majority of high-tech and manufacturing jobs are on the Mesa and in Sorrento Valley. Before the agencies can convince these people to trade their vehicles for a ride on a bus or light rail they must adapt their services

## Transportation Summit Searches For Solutions

**A**s chairwoman of the Board of Supervisors, I am cohosting a regional transportation conference involving San Diego County’s major employers. The event takes place from 9 a.m. to noon April 27 in the board chambers downtown, 1600 Pacific Hwy. Call Erika Black at (619) 531-5533 for information.

to better match the reality of today’s work environment. No soccer mom or baseball dad is going to miss spending quality time with a child because it takes a bus two-plus hours to get him or her home.

This is why, during the debate over TransNet II, I stressed the need to wisely spend limited transportation dollars to improve and expand this region’s road system. This is why I advocate my Parkway Plan to streamline and improve traffic flow between communities.

Public transit is important to this region’s future but it is not the primary option, as some urban planners tend to believe.

Transportation in San Diego County means traveling on a freeway or major roadway. How we improve the roads while augmenting public transit will determine how we protect and enhance our quality of life.

### *The staff of Supervisor Pam Slater-Price*

- **John Weil** ..... **Chief of Staff**
- **Sachiko Kohatsu** .... **Land Use**
- **Danae Ramirez** ..... **Health & Human Services**
- **Jim Gonsalves** ..... **Housing**
- **Todd Voorhees** ..... **Budget & Finance**
- **Joe Sheffo** ..... **Public Safety**
- **Anne-Marie Jewel** .... **Scheduling**
- **Frances Porter** ..... **Receptionist**
- **Dennis C. Lhota** ..... **Newsletter**

Contact us at: (619) 531-5533 or (800) 852-7334

Write us at: 1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335  
San Diego, CA 92101

Website: [www.pamslater.com](http://www.pamslater.com)